

Message Text

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ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-01
INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15
USIA-06 SSM-03 AID-05 IO-13 /089 W
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R 161150Z FEB 77

FM AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 1795
INFO AMEMBASSY AMMAN
USINT BAGHDAD
AMEMBASSY CAIRO
AMCONSUL JERUSALEM
AMEMBASSY JIDDA
AMEMBASSY KUWAIT
AMEMBASSY LONDON
AMEMBASSY MOSCOW
AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV
AMEMBASSY TRIPOLI
AMEMBASSY BEIRUT

C O N F I D E N T I A L DAMASCUS 1080

JERUSALEM FOR SECRETARY'S PARTY

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PLO, PFOR
SUBJECT: NO MAJOR MODIFICATIONS OF PALESTINE NATIONAL CHARTER
FORESEEN

1. DESPITE SPECULATION THAT FORTHCOMING PNC WOULD AMEND PALESTINE NATIONAL CHARTER WHICH CALLS FOR EVENTUAL REPLACEMENT ISRAEL WITH "DEMOCRATIC SECULAR STATE," WE HAVE NO INDICATIONS THAT THIS WILL BE THE CASE. DURING RECENT VISIT OF CHRISTIAN-JEWISH GROUP UNDER SPONSORSHIP NATIONAL COUNCIL CHURCHES OF CHRIST AND AMERICAN JEWISH COMMITTEE, QUESTION OF SUCH MODIFICATION WAS RAISED WITH FOREIGN MINISTRY DIRECTOR

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FOR AMERICAN AFFAIRS SHOIFI AND PLO REP KHATIB. BOTH ACKNOWLEDGED THAT PALESTINIANS LIKELY TO SETTLE FOR WEST BANK GAZA STATE BUT INDICATED THEY DOUBTED ANY MAJOR CHANGES WOULD BE MADE IN CHARTER. LOCAL JOURNALISTS AND ARAB DIPLOMATS HERE WITH WHOM WE HAVE DISCUSSED MATTER ALSO SKEPTICAL THAT ANY MAJOR CHANGES WOULD BE MADE IN THE NEAR FUTURE.

2. WHILE CHARTER OUT OF STEP WITH RECENT PRONOUNCEMENTS BY MODERATE PLO LEADERS, FEELING SEEMS TO BE THAT ANY ATTEMPT TO AMEND CHARTER WOULD WIDEN EXISTING RIFTS FURTHER WITHIN ORGANIZATION WITHOUT PRODUCING ANY TANGIBLE BENEFITS.

QUESTION OF RECOGNITION OF ISRAEL VIEWED AS MOST VALUABLE CARD PLO HAS TO PLAY IN SETTLEMENT PROCESS AND PALESTINIANS UNLIKELY TO USE IT WITHOUT KNOWING WHAT IT WOULD GET THEM IN RETURN.

3. EVEN SYRIAN PRESS WHICH FOR SOME TIME HAS BEEN NUDGING PLO TO MODERATE ITS POSITION RAN AN EDITORIAL FEB 9 IN AL-BAATH WHICH SEEMED TO GO ALONG WITH IDEA THAT ANY MAJOR CHANGES IN STATED PLO POLICY WOULD PREMATURELY PRODUCE DEEP DIVISIONS IN PLO RANKS AND PREDICTED THAT COUNCIL WOULD TRY TO KEEP SUCH DIVISIONS UNDER CONTROL.

4. COMMENT: BASED ON THESE INDICATIONS, IT IS OUR CURRENT ESTIMATE THAT PNC WILL PROBABLY MANDATE EXCOMM TO TAKE FAR-REACHING DECISIONS ON SUCH QUESTIONS AS PARTICIPATING IN PEACE TALKS AND FORMING GOVT-IN-EXILE BUT WILL BE CHARY ABOUT ATTEMPTING TO REFORMULATE CHARTER PROVISIONS DECIDED ON IN 1974 AND AT PREVIOUS COUNCIL MEETINGS.

MURPHY

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Message Attributes

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